



## CHAPTER 3 GUIDELINES FOR SITE ELEMENTS

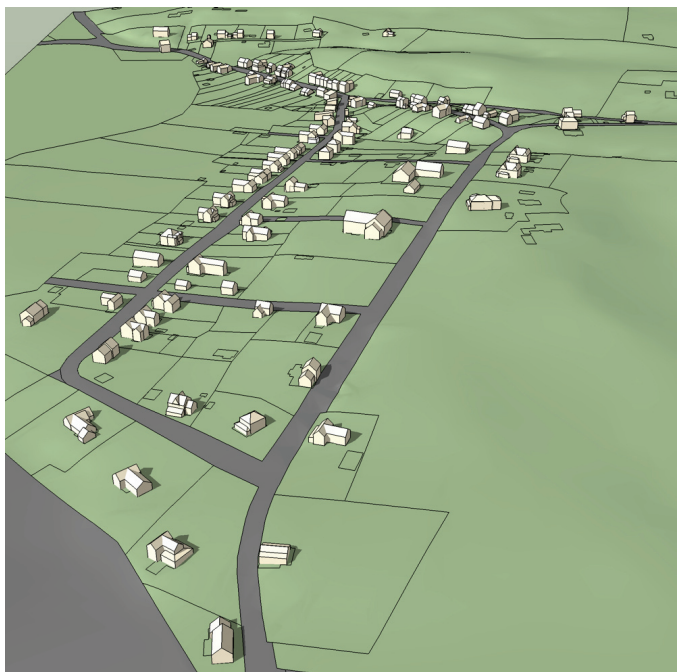


Site design is the relationship between a historic building and its site features, such as its setting and topography, lot layout, landscaping, paved features, outbuildings, and other elements within the property boundary.

## A. INTRODUCTION

Site design is the relationship between a historic building and its site features, such as its setting and topography, lot layout, landscaping, paved features, outbuildings, and other elements within the property boundary. These site features help define the historic character of the property and may be considered an important part of any project reviewed by the Historic District Review Committee (HDRC). As you plan your project you will need to consult the Zoning Ordinance for detailed requirements on many of the site features discussed in this chapter.

The Waterford Historic and Cultural Conservation District began as a mid-eighteenth century Quaker farm that evolved into a substantial mill village in the early nineteenth century. As market routes changed from wagon to rail, Waterford was bypassed by the railroad. Although some later development exists in the district, its appearance is that of a well-preserved antebellum village with few late-nineteenth and twentieth century intrusions.

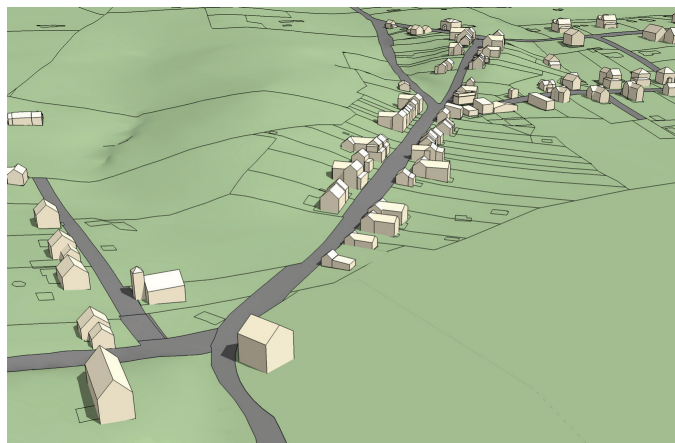


*This three-dimensional aerial view of Waterford from the south shows that the development of the village becomes increasingly compact as Second and High streets near the historic core.*

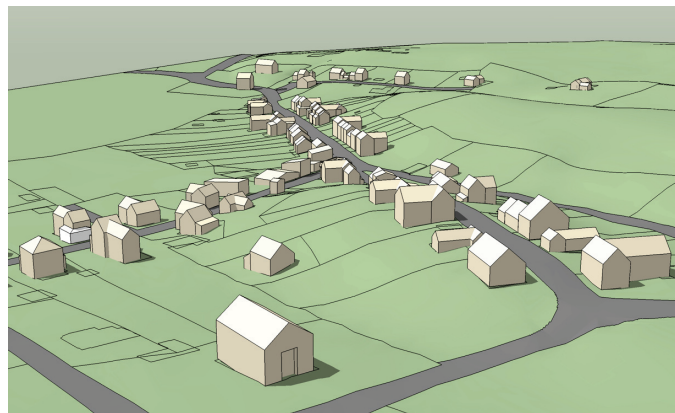
It remains a challenge to protect not only the historic structures of the village but their unique setting as well. Local residents and the Waterford Foundation seek to preserve the open farmland and through diligence have protected some of the surrounding pastures through open space easements.

### NOTE:

While driveways and parking, walkways and paths, and plantings and trees are outside the purview of the HDRC, Recommendations for Compatibility are included here as general guidelines.



*From the perspective of the mill, this view shows the massing and dense development of buildings along Main Street.*



*From the Waterford School, this view shows how many of the early buildings on Main Street were built to take advantage of the steep landforms on both sides of the street.*



## B. LANDFORMS AND FEATURES

The development of this mill village was influenced by its topography. The mill was established on low-lying land near Catoctin Creek and soon became the nexus of a network of roads radiating from the village. From there the village developed on the higher land above the mill. Buildings were not constructed on the top of adjacent hills, but rather built into them. This technique helped block prevailing winds and take advantage of southern exposure for passive solar gain. This topography led to the evolution of buildings along Main Street appearing much larger when built into the upward slope on the northeast side of the street than when built into the downward slope on the southwest side of the street.

Development was also bounded by Catoctin Creek, which effectively forms the western boundary of the village. Although many structures built along Main and Second streets back onto the creek, much of this flood-prone land could not be built upon. Later development occurred along both High and Second streets on less steeply sloping topography.

Mature trees throughout the district provide a lush canopy for the historic buildings. Preserved open space to the west contrasts with the dense development of the village and contributes to its overall character.



*Early village structures were built into the topography as seen in this example where the rear addition is attached to the second story of the main structure.*



*This view from the Waterford School looks across the village to the rolling hills of the farms beyond.*

### ■ INAPPROPRIATE TREATMENTS

1. Do not artificially contour the landscape.
2. Do not reroute existing natural or historically important man-made waterways.

### ■ GUIDELINES

1. Preserve existing landforms and features in their natural state.
2. Minimize any grade changes.
3. Retain existing trees and other site vegetation, especially when retention provides a backdrop for structures or a visual edge between properties.



*This historic view looking down Big Hill in the 1860s helps to illustrate how Waterford is located in a bowl.*







*Openings between the compactly arranged buildings at the center of the village provide a glimpse of Waterford's treasured views.*

## C. SITING

The siting of a structure can affect the long-range view from within the district looking outward or across the district. It may be the view of a compactly arranged central village with tree-lined streets, through a vacant lot to open pasture bisected by a creek, or across a tree line to the distant mountains. In Waterford, the views reach from the village to the crestline that surrounds the village.

### ■ INAPPROPRIATE TREATMENT

1. Do not obscure important views from the property or from other properties by the siting of new construction.

### ■ GUIDELINES

1. Protect views, especially of natural features such as mountains and agrarian open spaces, and other features that define parcel boundaries such as hedgerows.
2. Site any new construction according to historic precedents and to take best advantage of weather and views without obstructing historic views.



*Where development occurred more randomly near the edges of the district, open views capture adjacent rolling fields.*



*Turning down a country lane provides a long range view across a farm pond, to the property's tree line and rolling hills beyond.*





## D. STREET PATTERNS AND STREETSCAPES

Waterford street patterns record the development of the village while respecting its topography. Loudoun County helped establish early roads in the village to ease travel to and from the mill.

The Janney family, from whose landholdings the village evolved, subdivided a total of 32 lots along Main Street between 1790 and 1800 following the slope. Another Janney landholding was subdivided into 64 lots between Second and High streets in 1812. The gentler slope of this area allowed for cross streets and a grid type street pattern. Further development occurred on Water and Bond streets during this period.

Streetscape elements in Waterford include black-and-white street signs on wrought iron brackets; partial sidewalks of various materials including brick, stone, and concrete; and mature street trees that soften the appearance of overhead utility lines.



*This early streetscape is characterized by a tree canopy and rowhouses set close to brick sidewalks.*

### INAPPROPRIATE TREATMENTS

1. Do not introduce dead-end streets such as cul-de-sacs into the district. These are a suburban street pattern and are not appropriate in Waterford.
2. Do not introduce wide sidewalks and streetlights lining the primary streets into Waterford. They are not appropriate to the scale of the village.

### GUIDELINES

1. Retain the randomness and rural quality of the existing roads and lanes in Waterford and the certain informal placement of buildings.
2. Reinforce the historic pattern of streets/roads and maintain existing street/road patterns within the district.
3. New sidewalks in the historic district should follow historic precedents for materials, width, and location. Most of Waterford's sidewalks are narrow and of concrete, brick, or stone. Materials may not be consistent in the older sections of the district.
4. If a number of paving materials have been used in the district's sidewalks, base the choice of material for the new section upon the age of development of the majority of structures along the length of the sidewalk to be installed.



*Later development extended out of the village on Second Street. Larger lots allowed for front and side yards and a planting strip between the street and sidewalk.*



*Paving materials used on sidewalks in Waterford include this brick herringbone pattern example edged with granite curbstones.*



## E. ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES

The County has an archaeological record that dates back at least 10,000 years. Because of the abundant watercourses, particularly the Potomac River, the county has for thousands of years sustained human occupation. In the western part of the County, Goose Creek and Catoctin Creek were prime sources of water and wildlife for prehistoric peoples. These watercourses attracted the earliest European settlers as well and these secondary river systems served as the lifeblood for the early inhabitants of Waterford, Goose Creek, Taylorstown, Aldie and Oatlands. Over 1,500 archaeological sites have been identified thus far in the County.

The county requires archaeological investigation for most development applications. Though the county does not require property owners seeking a CAPP to conduct an archaeological survey, it is important to understand that you are stewards of the history of your property, including archaeological resources and that they should be preserved as part of that responsibility.

Each historic building is an artifact of a specific period in county history. The rest of the story lies beneath the house, yard, gardens, and fields. Most of the architecture of the districts is not the original dwellings of the earliest settlers. Historic lands often yield features and artifacts related to earlier historic, or even prehistoric, occupation of the property and can often provide much more insight about the life and culture of a property's inhabitants than architecture itself.

If you think you may have remnants of a previous structure on your property, please contact the Department of Planning before you continue with your project.



*The stone foundation of a building just below the old stone jail has been preserved and the site left undisturbed.*

## ■ INAPPROPRIATE TREATMENTS

1. Avoid siting new construction on or near a known archaeological resource.
2. Attachments to structures should not mask, damage, or destroy character-defining features such as archaeological sites.

## ■ GUIDELINES

1. Minimize disturbance of terrain, thus reducing the possibility of destroying unknown archaeological features or materials.
2. Locate new construction away from any known archaeological resources. Archaeological resources should be avoided and conserved.
3. Inform the Department of Planning if archaeological resources are discovered. They are protected by the same section of the Code of Virginia as historic buildings and above-ground sites.
4. Delay construction, where disturbance of the site is unavoidable, so that the site may be properly recorded by a qualified archaeologist before it is disturbed. Professional excavation is scientific and systematic in nature and involving detailed mapping and analysis.
5. Keep artifacts collected while gardening, tilling or construction on a property together as a collection. When possible make note of where on the property artifacts were found.

## NOTE:

The Virginia Department of Historic Resources has standards and guidelines that professional archaeologists must adhere to when conducting an investigation in Virginia. These *Guidelines for Archaeological Investigations in Virginia* are found in the *Guidelines for Conducting Cultural Resource Survey in Virginia* and are available at [www.dhr.virginia.gov/arch\\_DHR/archaeo\\_index.htm](http://www.dhr.virginia.gov/arch_DHR/archaeo_index.htm).





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Many Waterford outbuildings are constructed of vertical wood boards on a stone foundation and have small windows and louvered vents.



This barn-form outbuilding has evolved over time. Its construction into the hill allows access from two levels.



Based on a carriage house design, this new garage uses materials characteristic of local outbuildings.

**NOTE:**

Bona fide farm buildings and structures may be exempted from HDRC review per Section 6-1902 (A) of the Zoning Ordinance. An exemption will be granted where it is found that requested change would not have a clear and substantial detrimental impact on the character of the historic district.

**F. ACCESSORY STRUCTURES AND BREEZEWAYS**

The area directly around each primary historic structure typically provided a work area for the dwelling's occupants. Many early residences, even in villages, would have been surrounded by accessory structures. Tanners, blacksmiths and other tradespeople often practiced directly out of their residences or had separate sheds for the practice of their professions located for public access.

Chicken coops, smokehouses, separate kitchens, outhouses, and stables were not uncommon. It is possible that some of these outbuildings would have served more than one household due to the density of development and lack of flat land in Waterford's core. Little about the arrangement of the various structures on each lot was random. Each was sited for maximum advantage and expedited workflow.

By the mid- to-late-nineteenth century, kitchens and then outhouses were brought under the roof of the primary structure. Occasionally village lots will retain a representative outbuilding, but rarely does the overall character of the original lot arrangement survive.

**INAPPROPRIATE TREATMENTS**

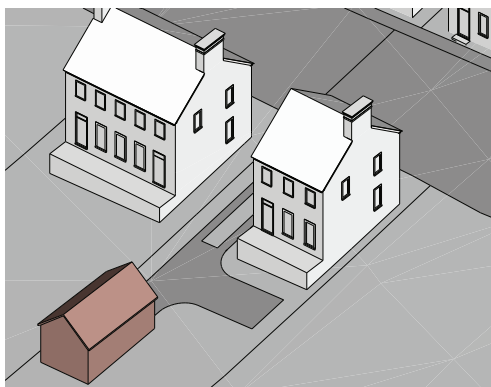
1. Do not tear down existing historic outbuildings.
2. Do not use prefabricated metal outbuildings.
3. Do not construct new outbuildings that are out of scale with the lot and house.

**GUIDELINES**

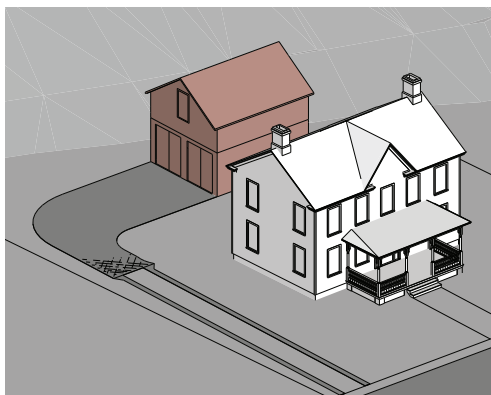
1. Retain and repair historic outbuildings following the *Guidelines for Existing Structures* found in *Chapter 6*.
2. Ensure that the design of any new outbuilding is subordinate to the main historic structure in scale, mass, and siting.



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*By following historic precedents for design, it may be possible to place a one-car garage at the rear of a village lot with the doors facing the street.*



*A larger garage may need to be placed to the rear of the structure where it will not be seen, and the doors oriented so that they do not face the street.*

3. The HDRC has established a hierarchy for garage placement and design.
  - a. The most desired design is for a detached garage, that if designed according to historic precedents, may have appropriate doors facing the street.
  - b. A covered breezeway connecting the garage to the house may also be acceptable based on the siting of the house and design and orientation of the garage.
  - c. If a garage is included in a new structure, its doors should not face the right-of-way and should be screened from view.
4. Place new garages to the rear of lots that are large enough to accommodate them following the applicable zoning requirements.
5. Site a new garage as a carriage house would have been sited historically, oriented to the street.
6. Design new outbuildings to be compatible with the style and character of the primary building on the site, materials, and roof slope. It is acceptable for masonry buildings to have frame outbuildings. For more information on appropriate new construction, see *Chapter 6*.
7. Paint outbuildings, garages, and breezeways to coordinate with the primary structure on the site.

**NOTE:**

Garages are not typically found in Waterford. Look to historic outbuilding forms, such as carriage houses and small barns, for appropriate massing and scale.





## G. OUTDOOR LIVING SPACES

The former workspace around many village residences now serves the leisure activities of the homeowner. It therefore can be a challenge to incorporate modern amenities such as patios, swimming pools, ornamental ponds and fountains, and pergolas or gazebos while retaining the historic appearance of the site.

It is important to consider that there are certain trade-offs made for living in a historic district. It is the preserved quality of the historic buildings that resulted in the recognition and protection of Waterford. These same qualities attract many property owners to the district.

If modern features must be incorporated into a site, their proper location is very important. By working with site elements such as the slope of the site, fencing and plantings, many of these features can be screened from view, thus reducing their visual impact on the historic character of the district.



*A brick path leads along the side of the house to a rear patio that is screened from view by mature site plantings.*

### INAPPROPRIATE TREATMENTS

1. Do not add modern outdoor living spaces such as patios, decks, swimming pools, ornamental ponds and fountains, and pergolas or gazebos in the front yards of village dwellings.
2. Do not radically change the contour of the lot when installing new outdoor living spaces. It may be appropriate to terrace a steeply sloping site.
3. Do not use materials that are out of character with the historic district, such as vinyl or composites, or unpainted pressure-treated wood.

### GUIDELINES

1. If absolutely necessary, place modern site features where their location minimizes their impact on the historic appearance of the property and site.
2. Use historically appropriate materials and colors for all outdoor living space elements. Refer to other sections in this chapter for appropriate paving and structural materials in Waterford.
3. Relate the materials used to those found in the construction of the buildings and other elements already existing on your lot. Adjacent lots of a similar age and architectural style may also be used for reference.



*The stone used for this patio repeats the foundation material of the shed to the rear of the property.*



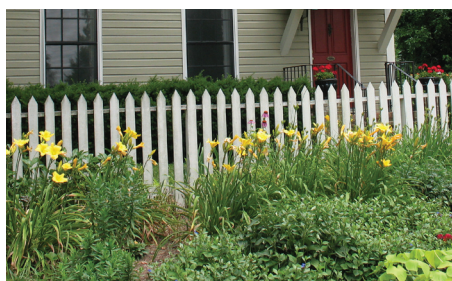
*Waterford's hillside sites provide opportunities for terraced, hidden outdoor living spaces.*



*A split rail fence against the backdrop of a board-and-batten outbuilding reinforces the rural character in Waterford.*



*A wooden three-board fence provides enclosure to this yard located above a stone retaining wall. The design of the fence repeats that of the porch railing.*



*Plantings accent this wooden picket fence.*



## NOTE:

Bona fide farm fences may be exempted from HDRC review per Section 6-1902 (A) of the Zoning Ordinance. An exemption will be granted where it is found that requested change would not have a clear and substantial detrimental impact on the character of the historic district.

## H. FENCES AND WALLS

Although there is an occasional brick wall in the district, much more common are low stone walls. These stone walls are a character-defining feature of the district and are used for both retaining walls in terraced areas and to level out a site path or sidewalk.

Wooden board fences are often used at rear property lines and around the mill property. Picket fences appear in great numbers, in both the densely developed and more open areas of the district. Wrought iron is seen near the Post Office and along Second Street. Rear yards may also be fenced with American wire, popular in the early-twentieth-century.

## ■ INAPPROPRIATE TREATMENTS

1. Do not exceed the average height of other fences and walls of surrounding properties with the height of a new fence or wall.
2. Do not use chain link, vinyl, or concrete block walls.
3. Do not use solid masonry walls that visually enclose the property from surrounding more open neighboring sites. Low stone walls are common in the district and are appropriate.
4. Do not fence front yards unless this is the prevailing condition of adjacent parcels.

## ■ GUIDELINES

1. Ensure that fence heights conform to zoning regulations.
2. Retain any existing historic fences.
3. Repair existing historic fences and walls by salvaging original parts or materials for a prominent location from a less prominent location, when possible.
4. Replace existing historic fences by matching the material, height, and detail.
5. Relate the scale, materials, color, and detail of the design of any new fence or wall to the scale, materials, and detail of the historic building. Simple designs are most appropriate to Waterford's historic Quaker character.

*Ornamental iron gates became popular in the nineteenth century and can be found on a number of Waterford sites.*

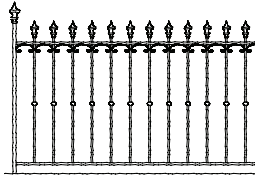


## J. FENCES AND WALLS, continued

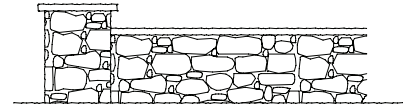


*The design of this fence repeats that of the stair and porch railing. It is stepped up the slope of the rear yard, following the site topography.*

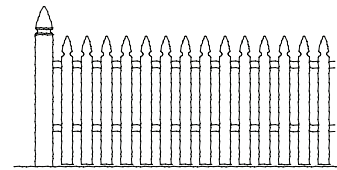
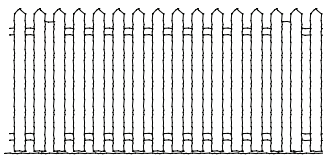
### TYPICAL FENCE STYLES



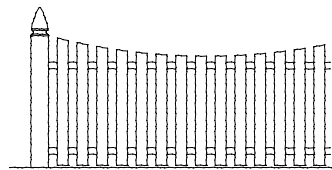
Decorative wrought iron fence



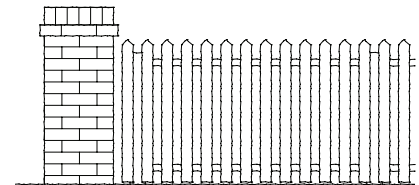
Stone wall



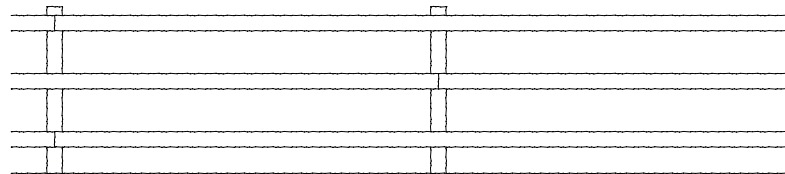
Two types of wood picket fences



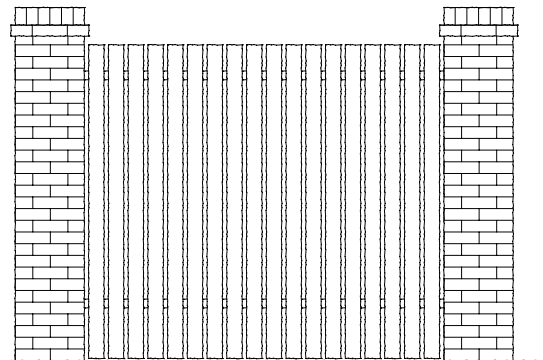
Decorative wood picket fence



Brick or stone piers with simple wood picket fence



Simple board or plank fence



Privacy fence with a combination of brick or stone piers and simple wood pickets



*Mechanical units are often located along the side of the house facing the driveway. Here a lattice screen is combined with plantings to shield the unit from view.*



*A shed-type structure may provide a visual screen for property-owner controlled site features.*

## I. MECHANICAL AND UTILITIES' SCREENING

Site appurtenances, such as overhead wires, fuel tanks, utility poles and meters, antennae and satellite dishes, exterior mechanical units, and trash containers, are a necessary part of contemporary life. The placement of these items can either have a neutral impact on the character of the site and structure or detract from their historic appearance.

Site features fall into two categories; those features that can be controlled by the property owner – antennae, satellite dishes, mechanical units, trash containers; and those that cannot – such as overhead wires and utility poles.

### ■ INAPPROPRIATE TREATMENTS

1. Do not place satellite dishes on roof areas, sides of buildings, or porch roofs where visible from public rights-of-way.
2. Do not place miscellaneous site objects, such as trash containers, in front site locations. If there is no other location, screen them from public view with plantings or fencing appropriate to the site.

### ■ GUIDELINES

1. Place site appurtenances in inconspicuous areas on the rear of the building or below grade, when possible.
2. Screen the location with appropriate plantings or fencing, allowing for appropriate airflow to these units.
3. Consider placing overhead utilities underground wherever possible.
4. Place satellite dishes on inconspicuous locations.



*Fences and plantings can screen those site features over which the property owner does not have location control.*



## J. ACCESSIBILITY

Access ramps or lifts are sometimes a necessity for residents of an older house that does not have an at-grade entrance. These devices can often be added to historic buildings in a design that relates well to a historic porch or secondary entrance and without substantially altering significant features of the building.

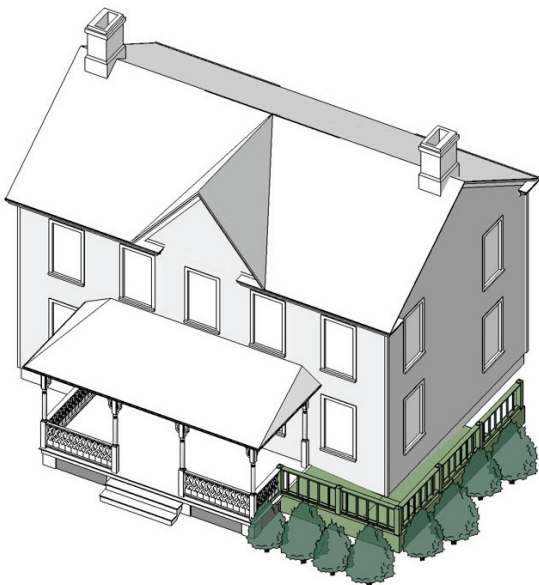
Prior to construction of a ramp or lift, you should seek advice from the Department of Planning. This office may be able to direct you to professionals that have experience in designing accessibility solutions.

### ■ INAPPROPRIATE TREATMENT

1. Do not place the ramp or lift where it interferes with the primary historic walkway or path, if possible. This may impede normal pedestrian access to the building.

### ■ GUIDELINES

1. Retain and preserve historic elements, such as porch railings, so that these original features may be restored to the structure when a ramp is removed.
2. Locate access at a well-defined entrance to the building and adjacent to any parking area.
3. Design ramps or lift enclosures to have the least visual effect on the building and/or setting and use materials compatible with existing materials on the building.
4. Consider the use of a mechanical lift rather than a ramp if the entrance is elevated more than 12 inches above grade. ADA access requirements require a maximum rise of one inch per foot.
5. Ensure that any solution is reversible; that it may be built, used, and removed without permanent damage to the historic features of the building.



*The accessibility option shown here is informed by the existing porch design and is screened by evergreen plantings to reduce its visual impact on the historic structure.*



## K. LIGHTING

Most of Waterford's structures were built long before the advent of electricity. Over time exterior lighting may have been added to individual sites. Small electric fixtures are often attached to either the wall adjacent to or above the front door or to a porch ceiling to provide illumination for the entry. In rare instances, a pole-mounted lantern-style fixture may be placed near a dwelling, steps, or the edge of a parking area.

### INAPPROPRIATE TREATMENTS

1. Do not use a series of small light fixtures to line a walkway or driveway.
2. Avoid unshielded security lighting and floodlights as they are not consistent with the character of the district.

### GUIDELINES

1. Retain any existing historic light fixtures.
2. Repair and refurbish historic light fixtures when possible.
3. Replace a historic light fixture only when parts for the existing fixture can no longer be found or replicated.
4. Check with local architectural salvage companies for period-appropriate light fixtures.
5. Use fixtures that are compatible with the character of the historic building and the surrounding area.
6. Choose light levels that provide for adequate safety but do not overly emphasize the residential site or building. Often, existing porch or entry lights may be sufficient.



*A traditional style pendant light fixture may be appropriate hanging from a porch or portico ceiling.*



*A lantern-type fixture can be mounted to either one or both sides of a door.*



*Waterford has a few examples of lanterns mounted on posts usually placed near the intersection of the public sidewalk and private walkway.*



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*Many Waterford sites have a brick walkway that leads either to a front door or between buildings to the rear of the lot.*

**NOTE:**

While walkways and path are outside the purview of the HDRC, Recommendations for Compatibility are included here as general guidelines.

**L. WALKWAYS AND PATHS**

In the oldest section of Waterford, houses have little or no setback from the street or sidewalk and are spaced with little to no sideyard area. These sites are steeply sloped and allow little room for site paths, unless adjoining an open lot. Where paths exist, they often take the form of stone stairs to move between terraced levels of outdoor living spaces.

On larger lots, especially along High and Second streets, brick or concrete walks often connect a house to the street or sidewalk. Paving stone of regular and irregular shapes are also found in the district.

**INAPPROPRIATE TREATMENTS**

1. Do not use large expanses of bright white or gray concrete surfaces or asphalt in visible areas.
2. Do not demolish contributing historic buildings for new paths.
3. Do not remove existing historic walkways or change their historic materials.

**RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COMPATIBILITY**

1. Retain existing historic walkways.
2. Replace damaged areas with materials that match the original paving material in color, size, texture, and finish.
3. Locate walkways and paths according to historic precedents and in arrangements that are appropriate to the size of the lot and scale of the structure.
4. Ensure that new paving material is compatible with the character of the district. The most historically appropriate materials are brick, stone, and warm-toned concrete.



*Stone stairs through an old fieldstone wall provide access to this hillside garden and are visually unobtrusive.*



*In a more formal arrangement, this very regular brick path and accompanying stairs are edged with boxwood as they lead to a terraced seating area.*



**NOTE:**

While driveways and parking are outside the purview of the HDRC, recommendations for compatibility are included here.

**M. DRIVEWAYS AND PARKING AREAS**

The small, steep lots of Waterford's core area of development leave little room for most site improvements. However, lots outside the Main Street corridor make some allowance for automobiles. Along Water and Bond streets, a parking area may be little more than a gravel shoulder to allow for parallel parking near the dwelling. In rare instances a concrete pad finished with a warm-toned pebble aggregate or two strips of brick may provide on-site parking.

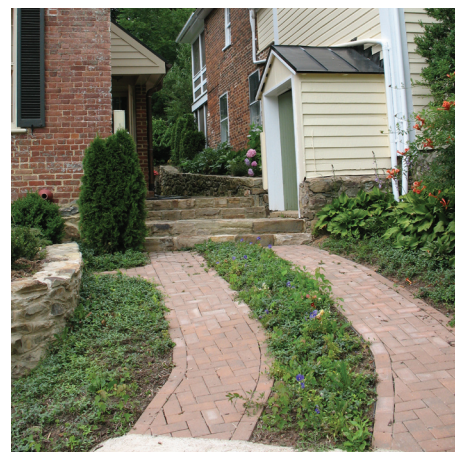
Larger lots in the district allow more room for site improvements. Driveways in this area may be gravel, two ribbons of concrete, or a solid pour of concrete or asphalt.

**INAPPROPRIATE TREATMENTS**

1. Do not place driveways on narrow lots if it will have a major visual impact on the site.
2. Do not place paved areas for parking in the front yard.
3. Do not use large expanses of bright white or gray concrete surfaces or asphalt in visible areas.
4. Do not demolish historic buildings for parking.

**RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COMPATIBILITY**

1. Retain existing historic driveways.
2. Replace damaged areas with materials that match the original paving material in color, size, texture, and finish.
3. Locate driveways only on large or medium size lots that can accommodate such a feature.
4. New parking should be located to the side or rear of existing buildings. It should be screened with plantings if visible from a public right-of-way.
5. Ensure that new paving material is compatible with the character of the district. The most historically appropriate materials in the village are aggregate-finished concrete and gravel.
6. Consider the use of permeable paving materials to reduce runoff.



*A brick ribbon-style driveway, based on early twentieth century precedents, now provides a location for plantings, not cars.*



*The sand color, exposed aggregate concrete used for this parking area blends well with the structure and other site features and is not visually obtrusive.*



*Evergreen plantings screen this parking area from public view.*





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*Waterford residents make the most of the little space sometimes available for plantings in the front of a dwelling.*



*An open space between buildings can provide an opportunity for terraced planting areas.*

**NOTE:**

While plantings and trees are outside the purview of the HDRC, Recommendations for Compatibility are included here as general guidelines.

**N. PLANTINGS AND TREES**

Like the placement of a structure on its site, the character of the landscape and accompanying plantings contribute to the identity of the historic district.

In Waterford, many streets have tree edges and lots that are punctuated with mature trees. A rural and random planting condition predominates throughout the district. More regular plantings, often dating to the twentieth century, mark Waterford's rediscovery as a retreat from Washington.

**INAPPROPRIATE TREATMENT**

1. Do not allow foundation plantings to grow out-of-scale with existing buildings.

**RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COMPATIBILITY**

1. Retain existing trees and plants that help define Waterford's historic character. Mature trees and other plantings can also help to shade the house or protect it from wind.
2. Replace diseased or dead plants and trees with indigenous species. Native plants are more resistant to drought conditions and therefore need to be watered less often.
3. Repeat the dominant landscape design (plant, size, and species) found in Waterford when installing new plantings.
4. Use new plants that, when mature, will be in-scale with the size of the structure and the lot.
5. Identify and take care to protect significant existing trees and other plantings when constructing new buildings.



*On a corner lot, the low stone wall is accented by formal plantings of evergreen and deciduous hedges. Large trees shade the house.*



*On larger lots, there are more opportunities for site plantings including the mature deciduous trees and perennials at the fence line seen in this example.*

